

## **HOMETOWN SECURITY STUDY COMMITTEE**

January 31, 2003, 1000 hours

Members Present: Chair General Stanley Heng, Carol Brown, Oscar Rios Pohirieth, Jim Geist, Don Marti, Craig Madsen, Major Guy Moon, Annette McRoy, Ken Svoboda, Doug Ahlberg, Fire Chief Mike Spadt, Police Chief Tom Casady, Julie Righter, Bruce Dart, Jeff Fortenberry

Not in Attendance: Larry Hudkins

### **Overview**

Mayor Wesely thanked committee members for the time they will be spending on this committee. This is an important issue and the City Council has recognized and tried to take steps to enhance resources. The Hometown Security Committee will serve as the community's voice that will help the city chart a course for the next 5-10 years.

Jeff Cole of the Urban Development Department is assigned as the City's direct staff resource with the Committee and Corrie Kielty from the Mayor's Office is the direct link to the Mayor.

### **Introductions**

General Heng asked members of the Committee to introduce themselves. Mayor Wesely said the members were carefully chosen to represent different backgrounds and perspectives and he feels they will do a great job.

### **Mayor's Charge to the Committee, Timeline and Meeting Protocol**

Jeff Cole distributed a copy of the Mayor's Charge to the Committee. The Mayor's charge is to have its work completed no later than June 1st so that it can be used during the budget process.

Because the Hometown Security Study Committee is a committee appointed by the Mayor, it follows the public accountability and disclosure guidelines that all Mayoral Committees follow; meetings are to be held in a public place, minutes of the meeting are to be kept on file with the City Clerk, and agenda be provided in advance of the meeting for public use. There also needs to be time provided for specific sessions that are dedicated to getting public input. Jeff distributed a draft meeting protocol for review. General Heng asked for guidance from Jeff Cole and Corrie Kielty about committee members

commenting to the public. Corrie Kielty said everything the committee is reviewing is public information. Jeff Cole said that meeting protocol of a similar study committee contains a statement that deals with requests from the press and asks that they be channeled through the city staff person to the Chair of the Committee to make public statements. General Heng said communication in any form is very important, but if comments are made, we need to make sure that any information given is factual. It is important to make people understand why it is the committee is recommending solutions. The way that is done is as important as the solution itself. Several committee members note that it was of paramount importance that the committee is not perceived as a rubber stamp to get certain things done.

Chief Spadt said if the Study Committee and/or Subcommittees are open and subject to public accountability and disclosure guidelines, how is the media to be handled. Some of the Fire Department issues are rather contentious and a rubber stamp outcome is of no value to the Fire Department. He wants honest input and factual data to assist as the city grows. It is important to find out if the Study Committee and Subcommittees need to comply with the open meeting law. Ken Svoboda will ask City Attorney Dana Roper to clarify the open meeting regulations. He also said he does not feel this committee should be looking at the capability of the city to pay for any recommendations it makes as much as the needs assessment of the city, and then let the City Council, the Mayor and the Chiefs decide how to fund. Recommendations from this committee, however, need to be practical.

### **Fire/EMS Work Group**

The Mayor's charge specifically mentions a work group to discuss Fire/EMS needs assessment, solutions, and options that are available, as well as various funding sources that are available presently and into the future. General Heng asked Chief Spadt to be the Chair of that subcommittee. Doug Ahlberg volunteered to also serve on that subcommittee. Jeff Cole distributed a list of nominations that the Mayor received for potential members for that work group. Ken Svoboda gave the history of why this subcommittee was spelled out in the charge from the Mayor. Shortly after the failure of the fire bond issue, he introduced an ordinance that would form a committee to specifically look at the EMS/Fire issue. From that, the Mayor introduced the Hometown Security Committee, which is much broader in scope. Chief Spadt said he was ready to begin work. He would like to de-politicize this issue, work with facts and prepare a good report. Several committee members noted that they needed more information about the existing status of first responder services in Lincoln before moving forward with Work Group assignments. Doug Ahlberg suggested that prior to the next meeting, the Committee receive a

needs assessment from the Fire Department, the Police Department, and the 911 Center as to what their requests would be for the upcoming fiscal year's budget, and a 5-year projection. Annette McRoy felt it was also important to have information from Emergency Management because it plays an important role in a disaster incident. General Heng said the information provided needs to state where we are now and where we are wanting to go in the future.

### **Risk to Lincoln**

Major Moon was asked what is foreseen as risks to the community with regard to terrorists or attack, assuming that we do go to war. Major Moon said as far as what is going to happen in the next 4-6 weeks, there is no way to know. Assuming we do go to war, the United States is more susceptible to some kind of terrorist activity; the most immediate risk is bio terrorist risk. All law enforcement and public safety agencies have identified that risk to exist. Whether it will happen here in Lincoln or the State of Nebraska cannot be predicted but we need to be prepared for it in the event that it does. What we need to do is try to prevent it, and if it happens, we need to be prepared to respond to it.

### **Next Meeting**

Things to be done at the next meeting: approve charge, approve protocol, have presentations from Police, Fire, 911 Center. Information is to be put out before the next meeting so that it can be reviewed prior to the meeting.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 12th, 1145 to 1300 hours in the LPD Classroom.

Meeting adjourned at 1125 hours.

Submitted by:

Virginia Fischer

